

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended): A process for producing aromatic ethers comprising a step of reacting phenols with an oxirane compound with use of an anion exchange resin as a catalyst, wherein the reaction of the phenols with the oxirane compound is carried out in the presence of a solvent having a solubility parameter ranging from 7.0 to 20.0.

2. (Original): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the phenols include multivalent phenols, and the aromatic ethers producible by the reaction contain a phenolic hydroxyl group and an alcoholic hydroxyl group.

3. (Cancel)

4. (Original): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the phenols include phenol or cresol.

5. (Original): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the phenols include catechols, resorcinols, or hydroquinones.

6. (Original): The process according to Claim 5, wherein the phenols include catechol, resorcinol, or hydroquinone.

7. (Original): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the phenols include bisphenols.

8. (Original): The process according to Claim 7, wherein the phenols include bisphenol A, bisphenol S, bisphenol fluorene, or bisphenol fluorene.

9. (Original): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the oxirane compound includes ethylene oxide, propylene oxide, isobutylene oxide, or 2,3-butylene oxide.

10. (Currently amended): A The process for producing aromatic ethers comprising a step of reacting phenols with an oxirane compound with use of an anion exchange resin as a catalyst according to Claim 1, further comprises and a crystallization step following the reaction step, wherein a solvent used in the crystallization step is identical to a solvent in the reaction step in kind, and at least a partial amount of the solvent in the crystallization is used in the reaction step in using the solvent in the reaction step.

11. (Currently amended): A process for producing aromatic ethers having an alcoholic hydroxyl group comprising a step of reacting phenols with an oxirane compound with use of an anion exchange resin as a catalyst and a crystallization-purification step following the reaction step, wherein of using a solvent used in the crystallization step has having a solubility parameter ranging from 7.5 to 12.5 for purification by crystallization.

12. (Currently amended): Aromatic ethers having an alcoholic hydroxyl group, which are producible by reacting phenols with an oxirane compound with use of an anion exchange resin as a catalyst, wherein the content of a metal in the aromatic ethers is less than 100 ppm by mass, and the content of a halogen element in the aromatic ethers is less than 100 ppm by mass.

13. (New): The process according to Claim 1, further comprising a crystallization step following the reaction step, wherein a solvent used in the crystallization step is identical to a solvent in the reaction step in kind, and at least a partial amount of the solvent in the crystallization is used in the reaction step in using the solvent in the reaction step.